

GERRY ANDERSON'S

SPACE 1999

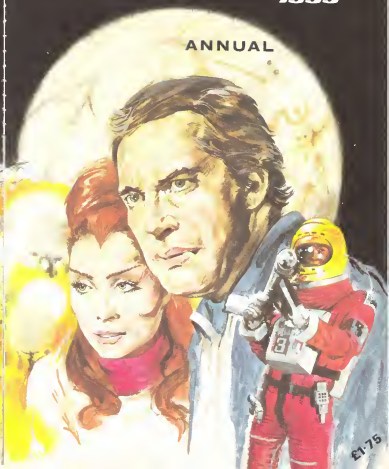


Authorised edition based on
the popular ITC Television series



GERRY ANDERSON'S **SPACE**
1999

ANNUAL



£1.75

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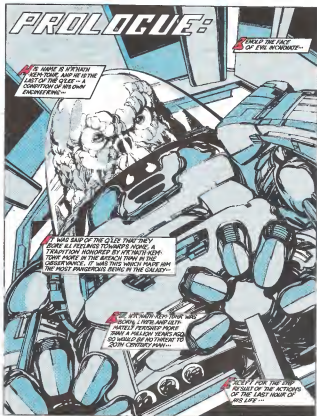
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Published in Great Britain by
World Distributors (Manchester) Limited,
A Perini Company, P.O. Box 111, 12 Lever Street,
Manchester M60 1TS
Printed and bound in Great Britain by
Monsen & Gibb Ltd., London and Edinburgh
ISBN 7235 6589 3



WORLD & WHITMAN

In the beginning...



THE FACE OF THE Q'LEE WAS GLEAMING WHEN OUR STORY WAS BORN, AND THEIR KNOWLEDGE WAS FAST...

PROBABLY FOR THIS REASON THE STARSHIP OF AY'NATH-KEM-TOMR WOULD LOOK UNSAUNY AND PRIMITIVE TO HUMAN EYES...



BUT IT WHIZZES THROUGH THE VOID AT VELOCITIES MUCH IN EXCESS OF LIGHTSPEED, AND IT'S LINES ARE NOT SO MUCH PRIMITIVE, AS SIMPLE...

PERCEPTIVELY SO...

OF AY'NATH-KEM-TOMR'S SHIP IS A FLYING WEAPON...



AND HER MASTER SITS SECURE AT HER VERY CORE... SURROUNDED BY CHAOS BOUND TO HIS WILL...

HE REMEMBERS, AS THE SHIP PLUNGES THROUGH THE EMPTINESS...

AY'NATH-KEM-TOMR REMEMBERS THE DEATH-MOONY OF HIS RACE, THE SWEET TASTE OF TOTAL GENOCIDE...



HE REMEMBERS THE SURGES OF POWER BENEATH ARM AS HIS SHIP RAISED DESTRUCTION ACROSS THE WORLDS OF THE Q'LEE...

IT'S THE PRISTINE GLIMMER OF A TELLTALE WARNING-LIGHT THAT STIRS HIM...



THE EVER ALERT ASTEROID LOCATOR HAS DETECTED A SIZEABLE MASS OF VALUABLE MINE METAL NEARBY...



AY'NATH-KEM-TOMR TWISTS HIS SCANNER INTO FOCUS...

SHAKES AN OBSCURITY TOO VILE TO BE PRINTED EVEN IN HIS OWN LOST TOMES...





IT IS A WEAPON, OF COURSE. THERE IS VERY LITTLE ABOUT HYDROGEN-TUNGSTEN-TOUR'S SHIP WHICH IS NOT A WEAPON OF MASS DESTRUCTION. IT'S SMALL SUPER-CHARGE METALLIC HELIX IN THE PERFECT GRIP OF A STRONG FIELD...



FORCE IN THE UNIVERSE CAN STOP IS ONCE IT IS IMPETUS AND HYDROGEN-TUNGSTEN'S FINISHER TYPE OUT THE COORDINATES OF.....

LET IT REALLY DOESN'T MATTER. WHAT TARGET HYDROGEN-TUNGSTEN HAS IN MIND FOR HIS ULTIMATE WEAPON...

PROBABLY IT WAS THE HYDROGEN CAPTAIN, BUT HE CAN NEVER KNOW...



LET HYDROGEN-TUNGSTEN WAS NOT CONSIDERED WISE TO WISDOM A MATHMAN. THE FORTRESS MIGHT LOGICALLY SEND A CREW OF PASSION!

THE FELTAP COMMANDER SHAKES ON A KISSING NOTE...

COMMAND THAT WOULD NEVER HAVE ISSUED FROM THE LIPS OF AN ETHICAL, SANE, FELTAP...



NO SIX SIX SEVEN BLUETS DART FROM THE UNPREDICTABLE OF THE PURSUIT SHIP!

HE WOULD HAVE BEEN ENOUGH...



HYDROGEN-TUNGSTEN'S SHIP PERISHES IN A FURY OF FUSING HYDROGEN—AND HYDROGEN-TUNGSTEN WITH IT...

BT, NO FORCE IN THE UNIVERSE CAN PENETRATE A STRONG FIELD...



UNPOWERED, UNDIRECTED, THE SET OF FLOTTING METALS AWAY, TRAILING DISRUPTIVE VAPORS...

VAPORS THAT MIGHT ONCE HAVE BEEN ONE HYDROGEN-TUNGSTEN...

AND THERE IS LAUGHTER IN HELL, THIS DAY...

SPACE: 1999

ABOUT NINETEEN TWENTY-SAND SERIES ALSO THE EXPANSIVE SPHERE OF THE FIRST GENERATION MET THE EXPANSIVE SPHERE OF THE WORK SPHERE...

THE ENSUING WAR ANNIHILATED BOTH SIDES, AND LEFT US WITH VERY LITTLE TO REMEMBER THEM BY...

SOMETIME THEREAFTER, AN UPRIGHT BEAST RETURNED TO HIS DESCENDANTS AS OLD-MAN-IN-YEAR, BEGAN THE LONG CLIMB TO THE STARS...

THIRTY YEARS AGO, HE SUCCEEDED IN THE FIRST SMALL STEP WHEN HEIL ARH-SYRONIC GET FOOT ON THE MOON...

MUCH HAS CHANGED SINCE THEN...

HOENIG TO MOONBASE ALPHA. DO YOU COPY?

PLANN MISSION, THIS IS HOENIG IN EAGLE TWO. DO YOU REAP?

EDITOR: GREGORY WILKINSON
WRITER/ARTIST: JONNY EVANS
COLORIST: MENDY FROE

PART ONE

FLOTSAM









...DANGEROUS...

THE FACE OF THE Q'LEE WERE
VERY SMALL BY HUMAN STANDARDS...

IT WORTH REMEMBER HIMSELF STOOD
NOT MUCH TALLER THAN AN AVERAGE
HUMAN INDEX FINGER...

ITS ULTIMATE WEAPON WAS SLIGHTLY
LARGER THAN AN ORPHEUS HAND GRENADE...

AND AFTER A MILLION YEARS OF
EXHAUSTION, MUCH OF ITS POWER
WAS LOST...

THE ATOM'S ENERGY TO UNRAIL
ENERGY TO RECHARGE WITH THE FORCE
OF A MAN-SIZED SUPERNOVA...

THE BURN ENERGY
WAS TO SUNDER
AN EAGLE...

XADEN'S SPACE SUIT PROTECTS HIM FROM THE MOST OF THE TERRIBLE HEAT AND RADIATION...



BUT THE SHOCK OF THE BLAST IS ANOTHER MATTER...

HUNABLE TO BRACE HIMSELF, XADEN IS HURLED WITH STUNNING FORCE AGAINST A RUDDY HEAD...

NOT ENOUGH TO RENDER HIM FULLY UNCONSCIOUS, THE BLOW NEVERTHELESS LEAVES HIM TOO DAZED TO PROPERLY REACT TO THE SITUATION...



HE HAS BARELY THE WITS TO ABOUT HIM TO GRAB AT A DOOR-FRAME AS THE RAPIDLY DISCOMPRESSION SUCKS EVERY LOGIC OBJECT INTO THE VOID...

BUT HIS GLOVES WERE NOT DESIGNED FOR SUCH A GRIP...



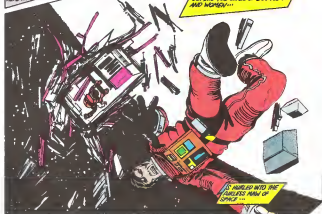
THE HURTLANE WINGS CONTINUE TO PUNCH RESENTLESSLY AGAINST HIM...

HUNTING...



HE GRIP FAILS...

AND JOHN XADEN, COMMANDER OF PROBEASE ALPHA, WHOM WHOSE SURVIVAL MUST ULTIMATELY REVERSE THE LIVES OF 300 MEN AND WOMEN...



HE IS HURLED INTO THE FURIOUS MOUTH OF SPACE...

SURVIVAL

PART TWO

THERE IS NO SOUND IN SPACE - NO SCENTS, ONLY THE NUMBING COLD OF THE EMPTINESS BETWEEN THE STARS...

AT LEAST, THIS CLOSE TO A STAR, ADAMS HAS THE SMALL RELIEF OF KNOWING THERE IS ENOUGH HEAT TO KEEP THE MOISTURE ON HIS EYE FROM FREEZING...

HE WILL NOT BE BLIND FOR THE REST OF HIS LIFE...

ALTHOUGH THAT IS A SPAN WHICH CAN NOW BE MEASURED IN SECONDS...



98765



HELMET?

BY COINCIDENCE, ADENING'S OWN, TRAD' ANY HELMET WOULD DO...

IF HE CAN REACH IT, THAT IS...

AND HE HAS ALREADY WASTED SIX PRECIOUS SECONDS...



PULLING THREE SPACE AT 100 THOUSAND MILES AN HOUR: A FINE MAN, AND A SLIM HOPE OF SURVIVAL...

BUT THE FORCE OF HIS EX-HIS-SION HAS SET ADENING TAPERLING...



TWISTS TRYING TO ANGLE HIMSELF FOR A PRESERVATE FEET...

KNOWING THAT TOO GREAT A TWIST WILL ONLY SEND HIM SPINNING...

GENTLY...

GENTLY...



HE'S LOCKED ON THE HELMET. ADENING FINDS THE CONTROL CIRCUIT ON HIS WRIST BY TOUCH...

ALREADY HIS FINGERS ARE GROWING NUMB, HIS LUNG'S ADENING...



NOW! ADENING OPENS THE VALVE ON HIS LEFT HAND AIR-TANK...

PRECIOUS OXYGEN SPURS INTO THE VOID...

BUT NEWTON'S LAW HOLDS TRUE: FOR EVERY ACTION, THERE IS AN EQUAL AND OPPOSITE REACTION...

4

KOEING MOVES!

SLOWLY... PAINFULLY
SLOWLY... BUT HE
MOVES!!BUT HIS IMPROVISED
THRUSTER IS OFF-
CENTER...HE BELIEVES TO
BE FAST AWAY
FROM HIS TARGET...

3

JOINTS POP
AS KOEING
STRUGGLES TO REMO-
VE THE HELMET...HE WILL HAVE
ONLY ONE
CHANCE...

2

GOT IT!

HIS SKIN IS
DRUMHEAD
TIGHT...ALREADY HIS
EXTREMITIES
ARE TURNING
PURPLE...

1

STAY CALM!

HELMET IN
PLACE...

LOCKED...

0

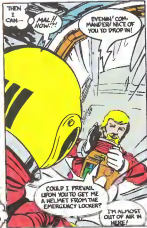
CONNECT
ROSE...

AIR!!!









REMIND ME TO HAVE
A CHAT WITH BERGMAN,
COMMANDER. THESE
SURVIVAL SYSTEMS
LEAVE SOMETHING
TO BE DESIRED.

WHEN THE --
WHATEVER -- BROKE
UP IN TURAN, THE
PLASTIC SEALS ACTED
AS IF IT WAS A
STANDARD MULL
ROCKET... --

UNFORTUNATELY, THE
OL' LOVE-CHILD WHO DESIGNED
THIS UNIT NEVER CONSIDERED
THE BREAK MIGHT EXPOSE THE
SEALS TO DIRECT SOLAR HEAT.
THE PLASTIC MELTED, AND CUT
ME OFF FROM THE EMERGENCY
LOOKER -- AND THE HELMETS!

THINKING AT HIS COMMANDER'S
AGE, ADOBE EXPLAINS HIS PLAN
TO LINK THE COMMANDER UP TO
THE SURVIVAL SYSTEMS...

ATTACHING HIMSELF TO THE ENGINE,
PAL BURNS GETS ABOUT ASSISTING
HIS COMMANDER...

FOR NEARLY HALF AN HOUR THE TWO MEN
FIGHT IN THE ENGINE BAY, STRIPPING THE
CONTROL LEADS AS THEY SLURK THROUGH
THE REMNANT OF EAGLE TWO.

ENTER --

IT'S NO GOOD,
PAL. THE GET-UP
IS FUSED BE
YONK HOLE...

I COULD REPAIR
IT ENOUGH FOR A LUMP
IF WE WERE IN THE
MAINTENANCE POOL
ON ALPHA. BUT --

BUT THEN, YOU
WOULDN'T HAVE TO, AS
WE'D NOT BE IN THIS
MESS, EH, SIR?

WELL -- IT'S BEEN
NICE KNOWING YOU,
COMMANDER.

DON'T BE SO
QUICK TO SOUND THE
TRUMP OF DOOM, PAL.
THERE'S ONE OTHER
TRICK WE CAN
TRY...

QUICKLY, AND SILENTLY... (FOR THE ONLY ENGINE-DRIVEN BURNS HAS DONE AGENTIC) AGENTS OUTLINES ARE PLAN...



INTENSELY, THE TWO SET TO WORK...



...YES!, THE STARDUST ENGINE MOVING - WHICH HAS SUSTAINED MAJOR DAMAGE, AND NOW RE-PRESENTS JUST 30 MACH DEAD WEIGHTS - MUST BE REMOVED.

THE COUPLINGS DEVERED AGENTIC MANEUVERS THE USELESS BELL-HOUSING OUT OF THE LINE OF FIRE...



THIS OPERATION WILL BE TRICKY ENOUGH, WITHOUT OBSTACLES...

THEN, THE MOST DANGEROUS MANIPULATION!

THE PORT HOUSING IS REMOVED AND RE-ALIGNED...



PRIMER GET, COMMANDER!

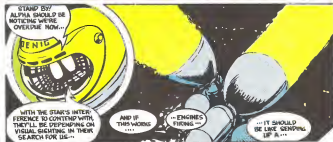


...GOOD...
...THE THRUSTER NOW POINTS TOWARD 90° TO THE AIRS...



ALRIGHT, PAL, THAT'S ALL WE CAN DO - EXCEPT PRAY...

...AND GET THE HECK OUT OF THE WAY, GIRL!!



STAND BY! ALPHA SHOULD BE NOTICING WE'RE OVERDUE NOW...

WITH THE STAR'S INTERFERENCE TO CONTEND WITH, THEY'LL BE DEPENDING ON VISUAL SIGHTING IN THEIR SEARCH FOR US...

AND IF THIS WORKS...

...ENGINES FIRING...

...IT SHOULD BE LIKE SENDIN' UP A...



"...A FLAME."

THE EFFECT IS
CALLED A "PINWHEEL."

IT IS NOT UNLIKE THE FIRE-
WORKS CHILDREN PLAY WITH
ON THE FOURTH OF JULY OR
GUY FAWKES DAY...

SURE THAT THE ARMS OF
THIS PARTICULAR PINWHEEL ARE
AS HOT AS THE SURFACE OF A STAR, AND
REACH SEVERAL THOUSAND FEET INTO
SURROUNDING SPACE...

AND EIGHTY
THOUSAND
MILES AWAY...

PROFESSOR
BERGMAN—
I THINK
YOU'D BETTER
LOOK
AT THIS...

WHAT IS
IT, PAUL?
THE EAGLE?

DON'T KNOW,
GIRL. IT APPEAR-
ED ABOUT FIF-
TEEN SECONDS
AGO...

HEHEH!
TRACKING A
LATERAL PATH
AWAY FROM
THE STAR...

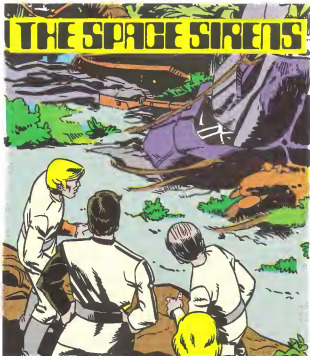
... BUT AT
RIGHT ANGLES
TO ALPHA.

COULD IT
BE EAGLE TWO,
VICTOR?

I SINCERELY HOPE
NOT, HELENA. LOOK AT
THE RATE OF RPM!

IF THAT'S A MALFUNCTION-
ING EAGLE, THE CREW WOULD
BE SPLATTERED ALL OVER
THE INTERIOR LINE TOOTH-
PASTE... BUT IT COULD
BE SOMETHING ELSE...





"Do you have any opinions?" asked Commander John Koenig as he and his comrades scrutinized the small planet pictured on the viewing screen in the Central Control Centre.

"The computer read-out is incomplete due to the insufficient data we've amassed about the tiny planet, but I feel that the initial prognosis is favourable," stated Professor Victor Bergman as he stared at the screen. "My own opinion is that the planet has several basic qualities which favour colonization. Our mechanical sensor probes indicate that it has ample vegetation and breathable air. The air, however, is much thinner than the air we are accustomed to breathing and it may produce a 'light-headed' or 'giddy' effect!"

"The intoxicating effect of the thin air is a minimal concern," interjected Dr. Helena Russell. "It could produce hallucinations, but the human body is a very adaptable organism. It will gradually make allowances so, in time, there will probably be no ill effects caused by the breathing of the thin air. I suggest an exploratory visit to the planet to determine its true potential as a prospective 'new' earth. The total absence of terrestrial life forms has made me a bit suspicious! I'll reserve passing judgment on the planet until I visit it."

"I, too, think that a visit to the planet is necessary at this point. It is very unusual that a planet with such lush vegetation is totally devoid of terrestrial forms," stated Bergman.

"I'm ready to go," admitted Koenig. "How about you, Alan?"

Captain Alan Carter smiled at the three anxious-faced outcasts from Earth. "I've already notified the launch bay to prepare an Eagle for immediate lift-off!" he replied.

The key personnel of Moon City quickly proceeded to the adjoining launch bay and boarded the Eagle that had been made ready for them. The pre-flight check list was swiftly read and seconds later, the refugees from Earth were speeding through dark, endless space toward the unknown planet they hoped would be their new home.



The sleek craft darted through the void of unexplored space and homed in on the mysterious, spinning globe that had no name. The distance between Moonbase Alpha and the planet was swiftly covered by the speeding Eagle.

Touchdown occurred minutes later. When the hatch of the Eagle opened, its occupants marvelled at the sight before them.

"It's a jungle! The whole planet is a jungle," stammered Carter as his foot touched the surface of the planet for the first time. "There are all sorts of strange, hideous-looking plants as far as the eye can

see. This is like a tropical rain forest gone mad! The plants are monstrous mutants!"

"Remember, Alan, these are alien plants," replied Bergman as he joined the Captain. "Who can say what odd abilities they possess? Who can even guess at how they get the food or what they eat? Perhaps they can even read our thoughts."

"If they can, they won't like what I'm thinking about them," answered Carter. "This entire planet reminds me of an overgrown weed patch!"

Koenig and Helena had joined their fellow explorers; and they were all enjoying a good laugh at Carter's comment when suddenly, they experienced strange, tingling sensations deep inside their skulls.

It wasn't painful, nor was it unpleasant. Total euphoria was the only way to describe it. Nothing in the universe mattered! They were at peace — totally, entirely, completely at peace!

It was then that the voice of the siren first spoke to them. The mellow, enticing female voice begged them to enter the foliage! It spoke to them inside their minds and told them to enter the jungle. First one voice and then another and then a chorus of voices pleaded with the visitors from Alpha.

"Come to us! Come into the jungle! We want to embrace you! Come to us!" the voices whispered.


Carter couldn't resist the lure of the sirens. He stepped forward toward the dense undergrowth. A hairy, vine-like tentacle wrapped its deadly coils around his hypnotized form and began to squeeze the life breath out of his lungs.

Seeing their comrade choking, gagging and struggling for his life snapped the others out of their spells.

"Fire at the roots!" ordered Koenig as he drew his stun gun. The deadly beams of concentrated light sliced through the vegetation like many keen-edged scythes. Carter was free.

The exploration party quickly retreated to their Eagle and blasted off. They had found a hostile, lethal environment where they'd hoped to find a peaceful habitat in which to create a new civilization. The quest would continue endlessly. The Planet of Sirens was only one of the million specks of dust that made up the cosmos. Perhaps a new Earth was waiting — somewhere in deep space!





THE NATIVES OF THE PLANET VIPON WERE PRIMITIVE, BIZARRE BEINGS! THEY WERE WAR-LIKE, REPTILIAN CREATURES WHO WANTED SPACE AGE WEAPONS! IN EXCHANGE FOR ATOMIC ARMS, THEY HAD PROMISED TO RELEASE JOHN KOSING AND HELENA RUSSELL WHO WERE BEING HELD HOSTAGE ON THEIR WEIRD WORLD!

EDITOR
BOB WILDMAN
SCRIPT
MIKE FELLOWSKI

PROT
SPY

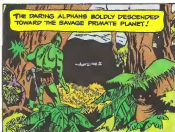
ESCAPE FROM VIPON

IF THE SPACESHIP FULL OF ADVANCED WEAPONS IS NOT AT THE RENDEZVOUS AREA IN 3 EARTH HOURS, WE'LL KILL OUR CAPTIVES! TANDAR, KING OF VIPON, HAS SPOKEN!

I CAN'T GIVE THOSE BARBARIC BEINGS LASER RIFLES AND GUN GUNS...THE REPERCUSSIONS WOULD BE CATASTROPHIC!

UNFORTUNATELY OUR SENSORS CAN'T LOCATE THEIR CAMP! IF WE KNEW WHERE JOHN AND HELENA WERE BEING HELD, WE COULD FREE THEM!

BUT ALL IS NOT LOST! I HAVE A PLAN! LET US TRAVEL TO THE ALIEN WORLD! I'LL EXPLAIN ON THE WAY!





WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO MAYA?
WHERE WAS THE MYSTERIOUS
MISTRESS OF MOLECULAR
TRANSFORMATION?



NOONE HAD NOTICED THE LIFE-SUPPORT
CYLINDER STANDING IN THE CORNER..



I MUST SEE WHERE THEY GO! BUT- THEY
MUST NOT NOTICE ME! I MUST MOVE THROUGH
THE JUNGLE LIKE A CREATURE OF THE WILD!



TONY HAS PLAYED HIS PART
WELL! NOW, I MUST ACT
OUT MY ROLE WITH EQUAL
EFFICIENCY! WHERE THEY
GO, I WILL GO!



LOCK THIS ONE UP WITH THE OTHERS! EVERY SECOND THAT PASSES BRINGS THE ALPHAS CLOSER TO DEATH! I MUST HAVE THOSE GUNS! I WILL HAVE THEM!



ALPHAS, HERE'S SOME COMPANY FOR YOU! THIS DOCT THOUGHT HE WAS A ONE MAN RESCUE PARTY! WE CAPTURED HIM AS EASILY AS WE TRAPPED YOU!



HELLO, COMMANDER! HOW DID YOU GET INTO THIS MESS?



NO! I DIDN'T GIVE IN TO TANDAK'S DEMANDS! I BROUGHT, HOWEVER THE BEST WEAPON WE HAVE ON ALPHA! MAYA IS HERE-- SOMEWHERE!



I'M LEAVING! KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN! THE ALPHAS MAY GIVE YOU TROUBLE! TIME IS RUNNING OUT FOR THEM!



THE ONLY TROUBLE I'LL HAVE IS WITH THIS PESKY INSECT!



THEY JUMPED US AS WE LANDED! WE WERE ABLE TO DESTROY OUR STUN GUNS! YOU DIDN'T BRING THEM WEAPONS, DID YOU?





WELL, AT LEAST
THAT BOTHERSOME
FLY IS FINALLY
GONE!

HEY!
WHERE
DID YOU
COME
FROM?



THESE VIPERONS HAVE THICK
SKULLS! IT'S NO WONDER
THAT THEY HAVE SUCH A
PRIMITIVE CULTURE!



LISTEN! SOMEONE IS
COMING! I'LL SEE WHO
IT IS! MAYBE IT'S MAYA!

NO... IT'S
THE GUARD!



ON YOUR FEET,
PRISONERS!
STAND UP!





THE VIPONS ARE PARALYZED WITH BEWILDERMENT AS THEIR DAZED CHIEF SINKS TO THE FLOOR...

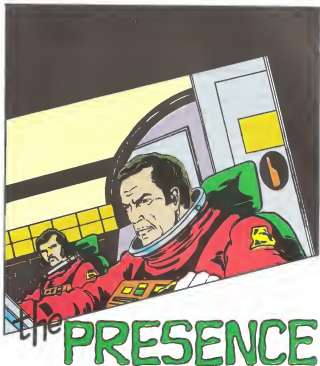
AHHH

THE CONFUSION OFFERS OPPORTUNITY ENOUGH FOR THE ALPHANS TO GAIN THEIR BAGLES AND ROAR TO THE SAFETY OF SPACE...

VAROO

TANDAR'S EVIL PLAN HAD BEEN THWARTED! KONGIS AND HELENA WERE FREE! THANKS TO MAYA AND TONY, THEY'D ESCAPED FROM VIPON!

END



Captain Alan Carter maneuvered *Eagle 1* over the arid terrain of this dry, brown planet. A tiny, silvery speck was visible in the vast dome of space. It was Earth's runaway moon to which *Eagle 1* would return after investigating the planet which Commander Koenig had hoped would be capable of supporting human life.

"Look, Commander!" Captain Carter said. "That's the ruins of a great city. And those vast depressions look as though they might have once been great seas."

Commander Koenig stared at the television screen. The lens was on zoom and he could plainly see other cities built on what had once been the shores of large bodies of water.

"Our spectroscope indicates an atmosphere composed chiefly of methane, nitrogen, and carbon gases. If oxygen ever did exist here, it has been depleted or destroyed. There are no indications of life."

Commander Koenig had transmitted this information to Professor Victor Bergman in Moonbase Alpha. "Very well, John," Professor Bergman replied. "Are you returning now?"

Koenig peered into the television screen, momentarily undecided.

"We've still got a few hours before you begin to draw out of range, Victor," Moonbase Alpha's commander answered. "We'll land and try to determine exactly what happened here."

Captain Alan Carter guided *Eagle I* lower, crossing the largest city below, then coming back. John Koenig saw what appeared to be level, clear space near the centre of the ruined city and the space pilot landed the shuttle gently. Around them there was a dismal grey jumble of shattered burned-looking structures. Suddenly, Koenig grunted.

"Look, Alan!" he exclaimed. "There are skeletal remains in the streets. I'm going to investigate."

Carter saw the bones and they worried him. "Do you think it's wise, Commander? There may be radiation fall-out or..."

"There isn't, Alan. Our sensors would have detected anything like that." Captain Carter said no more as John Koenig swiftly donned the silver suit which would protect him from the contamination outside. He donned the transparent bubble helmet, checked his oxygen supply, spoke to Captain Carter on the radio and then moved to the air-lock through which he could safely exit.

As the air was released, the atmosphere of this strange planet flooded the exit port. Commander Koenig climbed down to the surface, noting the gravity, which was not as great as Earth's had been but which was about twice that of the lunar surface.

He switched on the built-in camera which would photograph the environment every five seconds. It would be valuable for analysis later. Commander Koenig walked to the first skeletal figure lying on the hard, grey surface. It looked like a kind of street paving Koenig had never seen before. And the skeleton was unlike any living thing the men from Earth had ever seen. Koenig reached out and turned the roundish portion which had apparently been the head. At his touch, it crumbled to ash. He realized he couldn't bring a complete skeleton back to Alpha.

After thirty minutes, Captain Carter's voice sounded in his ears.

"Time to return, Commander," Carter reported. "Our base will pass out of range in another hour."

In the air-lock, Koenig removed the disposable suit he had worn, careful not to touch anything on which dust or debris might have settled. Divested of this outer covering, Koenig pushed the 'open' button and stepped back into *Eagle I*. Then, he re-opened the exit port doors and ejected the contaminated items he had

used. The interior of the air-lock was then flushed and irradiated with gamma rays. Both John Koenig and *Eagle I* were uncontaminated.

Or so Commander Koenig thought. Back at Moonbase Alpha, Alan Carter and John Koenig were admitted to a van which shuttled them to Dr. Helena Russell's domain, Moonbase Alpha's hospital.

Through glass ports in the van, Dr. Russell studied both men. They showed nothing until infrared light had bathed both figures. Then, Commander Koenig's right hand emitted a whitish glow.



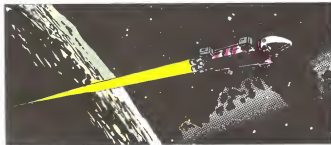
"Oh, no," Helena Russell breathed. "Some life form exists on his skin."

Technicians examined John Koenig's skin through the ports. Helena Russell analysed, fed figures into a computer, and she returned fifteen minutes later. Nozzles were attached to fixtures on all sides of the sealed van. Then, at a signal from the beautiful physician, both men were bathed in a fine spray that lasted sixty seconds while both men shut their eyes tightly and did not breathe. Then, a roaring spray was employed. Now, when the infrared lights bathed the men, there was no contamination. Dr. Russell signalled a technician and the van was opened.

Koenig emerged and looked at Dr. Russell. "What was it, Helene?"

"A fungus, John. It was spreading rapidly until the fungicide we used destroyed it. If we hadn't caught it in time, Moonbase Alpha would've been wiped out."

John Koenig nodded. Another deadly peril of unknown space had been dealt with but there would be more. He sighed. Would they ever find the home every inhabitant of the runaway moon prayed for night and day?



New hope was kindled amongst the occupants of Moonbase Alpha as the moon drifted nearer the lush, earthlike world - but danger awaits . . .

EPIC: GEORGE WILKINSON • WRITER: NICOLA CATTI • ARTIST: JOHN BYRNE • COLORIST: WENDY FIORE

IF THE MOON
DRIFTED NEARER
THE LUSH, EARTH-LIKE
WORLD, NEW HOPE WAS
KINDLED AMONGST THE
OCCUPANTS OF MOONBASE
ALPHA. AN EXPLORATION
PROBE WAS LAUNCHED
IMMEDIATELY...

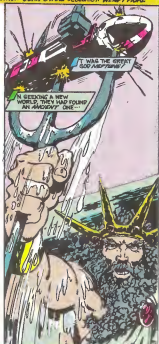


EAGLE FIVE
TO ALPHA, WE ARE
OVER ONE OF THE
PLANET'S OCEANS.
SUB-SURFACE SCAN-
NERS INDICATE MOVE-
MENT. IT'S A SAFE
BET THERE'S LIFE
IN THE DEEP.



CAPTAIN!
MOVEMENT ON THE
SURFACE... BURSTLES
AND RAPIDLY RE-
... SOMETHING IS
DEVELOPING!

OH MY
GOD! LOOK,
WHAT IT
IS!



IT WAS THE GREAT
GOD NEPTUNE!

IN SEEKING A NEW
WORLD, THEY HAD FOUND
AN ANCIENT ONE...

**GODS OF THE PLANET
OLYMPUS**

AND, A HALF A MILLION
MILES AWAY...

MAIN MISSION HEARS THE LAST
SIGNAL OF THE CRIPPLED EAGLE...

MAIN MISSION TO
EAGLE FIVE! ALAN, THIS
IS PAUL... DO YOU COPY?
COME IN, EAGLE FIVE!

REPORT, PAUL.
WHAT'S
HAPPENING?

ALL CONTACT LOST
WITH EAGLE FIVE.
COMMANDER, I CAN'T
EVEN BRING THEM
HOME BY REMOTE.

ANY LAST
MESSAGE? ANY
THING?

WELL... YES,
SIR -- BUT IT WAS
VERY GARBLED -- AS
IF THE CHIP HAD SUS-
TAINED MAJOR
DAMAGE...

... IT SOUNDED AS
IF CAPTAIN CARTER
SAID THEY WERE
CAPTURED BY -- BY
THE SEA-GOD,
NEPTUNE!

NEPTUNE --??
VICTOR, WERE YOU
MONITORING THEIR
TRANSMISSION?

THEN HE MUST
HAVE BEEN WAK-
PELLICIOUS...

I WAS IMPER-
JOHN! AND THIS
IS WHAT HE
SAID, ALRIGHT!

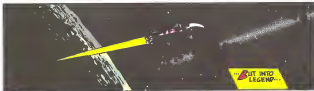
NO, AFRAID NOT. WHY
HE WOULDN'T INGANE, EITHER.
HELENA WAS MONITORING BOTH
CREWMEMBERS. CARTER AND
THE GUY, GENUINELY BELIEVED
THEY WERE SEEING NEPTUNE.

I'M GOING TO SET UP A
SMALL SEARCH AND RESCUE
PARTY, VICTOR. YOU, ME...
AND DR. RUSSELL.

HELENA?

OH, OF COURSE...
ONE OF HER PET HOBBIES
IS THE GREEK AND RO-
MAN CLASSIC MYTHS...

EAGLE TWO PREPARES ITSELF FOR A TRIP,
NOT JUST TO AN ALIEN PLANET...



SHORTLY, THE EAGLE WAS
OVER THE VAST OCEAN OF
THE UNEXPLORED WORLD...



CONTACT, JOHN/
COMPUTER IS TRACKING
THE COURSE OF THE
FIRST EAGLE.

KEEPING TO MAIN
MISSION. NOTHING SO
FAR, PAUL. CONTINUING
DUPLICATE COURSE...

APPROACHING A
CONTINENTAL LAND MASS.
READINGS SHOW EAGLE
FIVE WENT INLAND...
WE'RE FOLLOWING!



JOHN,
THERE IT
IS!

KEEPING TO MAIN MISSION.
WE'VE LOCATED
EAGLE FIVE.

IT'S WRECKED.
NO SIGNS OF LIFE.
WE'RE GOING DOWN
TO INVESTIGATE...





CARTER! BEN-
JAHN! CAN ANY
ONE HEAR ME?

NO BODIES,
AT LEAST, JOHN.
WHATEVER HAPPENED,
THEY WALKED AWAY
FROM THE CRASH...



WHAT ABOUT
THOSE SIX RUPTURES,
VICTOR?
METEORS?

I DON'T THINK SO, JOHN.
THE UPPER HOLE IS THE SAME
SIZE AS THE LOWER, YET AN
IMPACT HARD ENOUGH TO BREAK
AN ANGEL'S WALL, WOULD
MELT/ZZZ MOST METEORIC
ROCK FORMS.

THE "EXIT
WOUND" WOULD
BE SUBSTANTIAL:
IT SMALLER...

BESIDES, FROM
THE CORRUPTURE OF
THE BROKEN METAL,
YOU CAN TELL THE
PENETRATION WENT
FROM BELOW...



ANY OTHER
THEORIES?

ONLY A WILD ONE -
SIX RUPTURES, PERFECTLY
ALIGNED, AS IF SOMETHING
WITH THREE PRONGS HAD
SLAMMED THROUGH--AND
NEPTUNE SUPPOSEDLY
CARRIED A TRIDENT!

JOHN,
VICTOR,
LOOK!

WE'RE BEING
BOMBARDED WITH
ROCKS!!



ACCAH!
THOSE ARE
ROCKS!!

THEY'RE COMING
FROM ABOVE THAT
CLIFF-- I THOUGHT
I SAW HUGE AVALANCHES
TOSS THEM...

HANPS??

WITH A FERAL GHAUL OF FEAR,
A NIGHTMARE APPEARS OVER
THE LIP OF THE CLIFF ...

JOHN! THAT'S
A CYCLOPS! WE'LL
NEVER GET TO THE
SHIP WITH AHH THERE.
WE'LL PROX A BOULDER
ON US ... !!

NOT VERY LIKELY, HELENA," SAYS
VICTOR BERGMAN. "WITH ONLY ONE
EYE, HE HAS NO DEPTH PERCEPTION!
HE CAN'T JUDGE HOW FAR AWAY WE
ARE ... THAT'S WHY HE KEEPS
MISSING THE EAGLE ..."

THEN, WE'D BETTER
SPOT HIM BEFORE HE
MAKES A LUCKY THROW!

FULL
POWER
...!

UNGH!
STINGS!
HURT!





LITTLE ONES
HAVE BIG STINGS,
BUT NOT STING
THIS ONE!

**HAA
HAA**



SOME HOURS LATER, THE STENCH
OF ROTTED STRAW AND DECAYING
FOOD COINED THE EXPLORERS
BACK TO... *REALITY*...?

WHAT HAVE
WE GOTTEN INTO
THIS TIME?

I'D WAIT UNTIL YOU'RE
FULLY CONSCIOUS BEFORE
YOU LOOK. YOU'LL NEED
ALL YOUR STRENGTH.



ACES LIKE THEIR OWN
STOOD OR HUNG ALL ABOUT
THE CYCLOPS' CAVE, AND
SOME HELP... *PEOPLE*...

INCLUDING...

COMMUNGER! ARE WE
GLAD TO SEE YOU? ...ALTHOUGH
I'D HAVE PREFERRED YOU
AT THE HEAD OF A RESCUE
PARTY...

WE STARTED OUT
THAT WAY, ALAN. HAVE
YOU LEARNED ANY-
THING...?

'FRANK NOT. WE
WERE KNOCKED OUT
WHEN NEPTUNE PROOF-
FED US. OL' BLINKY
THEY'RE ZALAYS, BUT
NOT TO US.



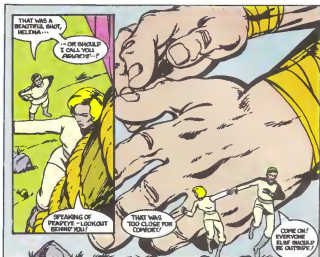
THE OTHERS SEEM
TOO AFRAID OF THE
CYCLOPS TO GET VERY
CONVERSATIONAL...



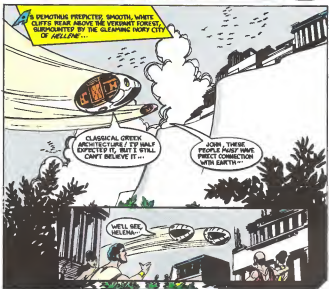
THIS ONE
SPEAK! SPEAK
TO YOU!

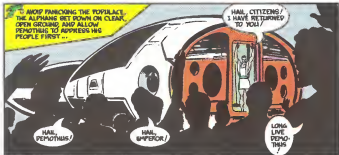
JOHN!











THEY TOWER BETTER THAN
FORTY STORIES INTO THE CLEAR
BLUE SKY, AND THEIR AGE LIES
HEAVY UPON THEM...

AGE THAT HAS WORN
AWAY MUCH OF THE
GREEN THAT MUST ONCE
HAVE BEEN THEIRS...

AGE THAT HAS ALLOWED THE
RELENTLESS IVY TENDRILS OF
THE FOREST TO ENCRUACH
UPON THEIR SLEEK HULLS...

LIT, FOR ALL THAT,
THEY STAND REVEALED
TO KOENIG'S TRAINED EYE...

REVEALED FOR WHAT
THEY TRULY ARE...

"SPACE SHIP!/
INTERSTELLAR" BY
THE SIZE OF
THEM...

ALL THE PIECES
FALL NEARLY INTO
PLACE -- IT'S SO
OCCURS, ONCE
YOU KNOW...

NOT TO
ME, COMMANDER
...?

"YOUR PEOPLE
ARE NOT NATIVE
TO OLYMPUS,
DEPOSITING."

"YOU ARE THE
DESCENDANTS OF
A RACE OF SPACE
TRAVELLERS WHO
SETTLED HERE
MORE THAN FIVE
THOUSAND YEARS
AGO..."

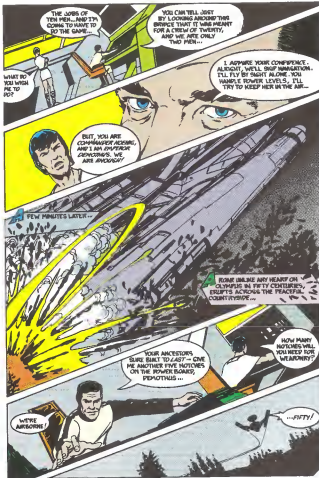
I CAN ESTIMATE
THE DATE, EASILY. YOU
SEE, SOME OF YOUR
ANCESTORS DECIDED
NOT TO STAY ON
THIS PLANET...

...THEY
JOURNEYED
ON...

AND ONE
DAY THEY CAME
TO THE THIRD
PLANET OF A
DISTANT STAR...

AND THERE THEY
STAYED, HEARD A GREAT
BLUE SEA -- AND TOLD
STORIES OF GODS ON
OLYMPUS!





THINGS DO NOT HOPE WELL FOR THE BESIEGED CITY. THE HOAR OF ARROWS HAS ENDED, BUT THE ONSLAUGHT OF WARRIORS HAS ONLY BEGUN...



WHL...

THE GOOD SHIP TEMPLE OF ARKELLO PLUNGES INTO VIEW.



AND A MOMENT OF FEAR GIVERS THROUGH THE WARRIORS...

WE'LL GO FOR THE ONES ON THE CLIFF FACE, FIRST - I JUST HOPE I CAN MANSLIVER THIS BEAST...



NOT ALL THE GODS ARE CARRIED BY THE SPEEDING CRAFT...



AS MORING ENTERS THE CHIEF FOR A STRAFFING RUN, ONE WARRIOR GLANCES HIS BLADE THROUGH AN ENGINE MODULE...

QUICK! POWER FAILING ON THE STARBOARD SIDE, INCREASE INPUT!



IN-CREAS-ING!

LOTS OF FORCE LANCE DOWN- AND JOHN MORING LEARNS WHY THE GODS FULF...

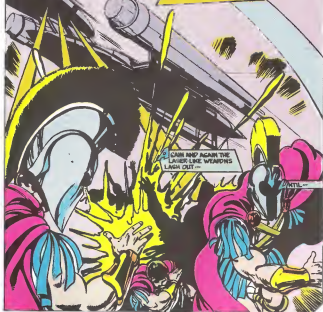


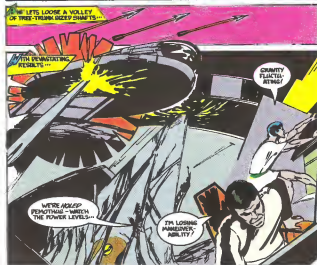
THOUGH THE WARRIORS FALL, THEY ARE ONLY STUNNED BY THE BLASTS, AND A DOZEN MORE SPRING UP IN THEIR PLACE...





THE ENGINES SCREAMING, THE GIANT STRONGMAN HURTTLES THROUGH THE ARMY OF GODS ...





HANG ON! THE ARROW
MIGHT HAVE BRANCHED
THE GRAVITY PLATES--

WE'LL BE
ALRIGHT,
PROVIDED
THEY DON'T
....

JOHN KOTHAK'S ROCKET TRAILS
OFF ... ABOVE THE TREES, A
MONETHEM, FLOPPING SHAPE ...

DEMONSTRATE!
TELL ME THAT ISN'T
WHO I THINK IT
IS ... ?

I DO NOT
REAP YOUR
THOUGHTS ...

... BUT THAT IS
ZEUS!

GOT TO
CLIMB
ABOVE
HIM ...

TOO LATE!

MIGHTY THREW
ARMS BRIZE THE
STAIRSHIP ...







THE MICRON METAMORPHOSIS

"Do we have a sensor scan of the planet?" inquired Commander John Koenig as the Eagle craft containing Dr. Helena Russell, Professor Victor Bergman and himself sped towards the tiny, mystery world they'd stumbled onto in the deep, dark regions of unexplored space.

"Yes, John, we have a data read-out," replied Bergman in his usual stoic tone. "The computer scan confirms that there is alien life on the strange, miniature planet. The sensors can determine if life exists, but they cannot determine the structure or makeup of alien life forms without more information. What type of aliens we will find, I do not know, but we will definitely find life on that planet," stated Bergman.

"I wish we could stop referring to what may well be our new home as 'that planet'. Since we discovered it, I think we're entitled to name it," said Helena as she stared at the central viewing screen on which the planet was visible.

"It may already have a name since some form of native life exists on it, but I don't see anything wrong with giving it a temporary name. Do you, Victor?" asked Koenig as he mentioned the Eagle into the planet's atmosphere.

"Give it a name, Helena! The honour is yours," replied Bergman.

"Thank you, Victor. I'll be happy to name it," answered Helena. "Since the entire planet is a microscopical reproduction of Earth and it is only about the size of North America, I am going to dub it Micron," she said.

"Micron is a perfect name for the planet," said Koenig as he prepared to touch down on the surface of the tiny world.

"Welcome to Micron," quipped Bergman as the Eagle came to rest on the new and unexplored world. "The air is breathable. We won't need space suits," announced Victor as he checked the sensor scopes.

"There is certainly a strange collection of alien vegetation growing on Micron," commented Helena when the hatch of the Eagle opened to allow the Alpha crew to exit. "There seems to be no biological order. It's uncanny!"

"Rather than ponder the causes of such unusual plant formations, I suggest that we proceed to search for the dominant life form," proposed Victor. "I hypothesize that whatever fell out of space onto this planet took root and grew. That might account for the lack of single species dominance."

Before Bergman could finish explaining his theory to his comrades, the ground beneath their feet began

to tremble. At first, it appeared to be a mild tremor that would rapidly pass. Then, suddenly, inexplicably, it began to increase in intensity.

The refugees from Earth fell to the ground and clung to the soil of the alien world in a useless attempt to steady themselves.

Soon, they realized that the terrible, violent shaking was more than just an ordinary earthquake. Micron was crumbling, breaking up, exploding! The entire planet was splitting right down to the core of the miniature world.

"Get back to the Eagle! We've got to blast off from this planet, immediately!" shouted Koenig as he fought to regain his balance.

Practically, they got back on their feet and staggered toward their space vehicle. Luckily, they reached the ship. Quickly, they prepared for immediate lift-off.

The Eagle slowly rose from the surface. When a suitable altitude was attained, Koenig used the massive power of the ship's rockets to flee to the outer limits of space where they were safe.

Koenig, Bergman and Russell watched on the viewing screen as the planet they had named Micron began to splinter and crack. The circular mass of soil and foliage was breaking apart.

They realized that what they were watching wasn't the destruction of a tiny planet. A world wasn't going up in smoke. Life wasn't being snuffed out. There was no life on the surface of Micron! The living creature their sensor scan had detected was inside Micron!

This strange speck of dust floating aimlessly through the outer limits of the universe wasn't a planet. It was a hollow shell! It was an egg! Micron was a gigantic cocoon with bits of dirt and vegetation lying on its outer surface.

Suddenly, the entire planet shattered. A huge, winged insect emerged from the dark, inner regions of Micron. The monstrous, alien bug immediately launched itself into space and zoomed off into the unexplored regions of the universe at supersonic speed.

"My god!" stammered Koenig as he watched in amazement. "Micron wasn't a planet! It was the cocoon of a gigantic space insect!"

There were no explanations for what had transpired. Some of the mysteries of dark space are beyond the scope of human comprehension and intelligence. There would never be any answers to their many questions about Micron—for Micron never really existed!



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